

PALM Expert

To reduce the risk of your Palm crashing when you install new software, Julian Prokaza shows you how to install and use a simulator that makes your PC think it's a Palm



PALMONE DROPS ONE

By the time you read this, palmOne will have changed its name back to Palm after acquiring the rights to the brand name from PalmSource in a \$30 million (around £17m) deal.

"The letters P A L M reflect a prized brand with significant customer awareness and earned loyalty," said Ed Colligan, the company's president and CEO. "Innovation, power, ease of use and elegance are all attributes of the brand, and we intend to invest to turn what is a strong name today into a household word synonymous with leadership in mobile computing."

Palm OS-based handhelds are still widely, if wrongly, referred to as 'Palms'. Palm could, of course, have saved itself the money and not changed its name in the first place. The switch from Palm to palmOne came in 2003, following the spin-off of its software division, PalmSource, into a separate company. Many thought Palm was making a mistake in dropping the Palm brand.

NEW GPS ACCESSORIES

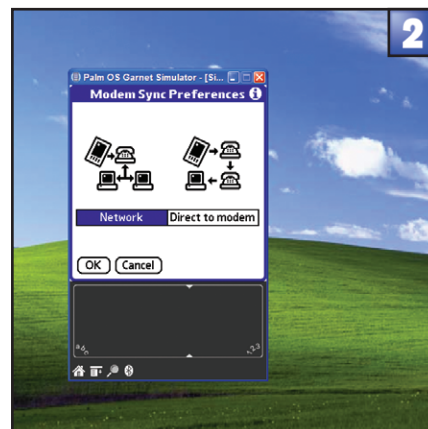
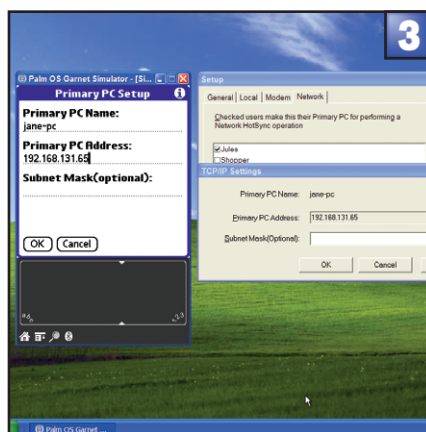
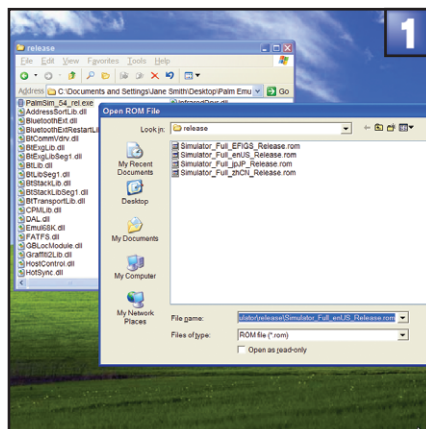
Palm has launched a range of new accessories, including a GPS car kit for the Tungsten E2. The kit comes with ViaMichelin Navigation software on SD card, along with maps for the UK and Ireland. A built-in speaker provides spoken instructions and the unit mounts on a car dashboard or windscreen, drawing power from the lighter socket. The kit costs £299 and is available now.



LG TEAMS UP WITH PALM

After losing a number of high-profile Palm OS licensees, PalmSource has signed a major new one. LG Electronics plans to develop and market smartphones based on Palm OS.

"LG Electronics is pleased to have entered into this agreement with PalmSource," said Skott Ahn, executive vice-president of LG Electronics Inc. "The flexible, open and powerful nature of Palm OS is an ideal match for our industry-leading mobile handsets."



Unless you're a Palm OS developer, there's not much to see at the website of PalmSource, the company responsible for Palm OS. However, there are two intriguing free downloads at www.palmsource.com: the Palm OS Emulator and Palm OS Simulator. These are designed to make a normal PC think it's a Palm.

Before we talk about what they do, let's clear up the difference between the emulator and the simulator. In this case, the two programs are simply the result of two different ways PalmSource (and previously Palm) has chosen to implement a Palm OS emulation. Palm OS 4.x devices were emulated on a PC by a program that pretended to be the Dragonball processor. This meant the emulator could run the original code from 68K ROMs. For Palm OS 5.1 onwards, Palm switched to a version of Palm OS that was recompiled to run on a normal Windows processor.

Unless you're a developer, though, none of this matters. The Palm OS Garnet 5.4 Simulator works just like any Palm OS device that's currently available. A Cobalt 6.0 Simulator is available, too, which you can try if you're interested in seeing what the new OS looks like.

If you're not a developer, why would you be interested in these tools? One obvious use is to test new software. Installing and removing programs can have various effects, from leaving files behind when you uninstall, to putting a handheld in a crash loop. Trying software out on the simulator first is a risk-free way of finding out if it's worth installing.

You can download the simulator from www.palmos.com/dev/tools/simulator, but you'll need to register with the site at www.developer.pavilion.com/palmos/page.asp?page_id=175 first. Download the Palm OS Garnet 5.4 Simulator Zip file called `PalmOS_Garnet_54_simulator.zip`. Unzip the file and locate the simulator in the folder called Release. The following steps explain how to install, use and HotSync the simulator.

1 Double-click `PalmSim_54_reLexe` to start the simulator and select the `Simulator_Full_enUS_Release.rom` file in the same folder when prompted. A Palm OS 5.4 handheld is now running in a window. The mouse pointer works as the stylus and you type using the PC keyboard and install PRC files simply by dragging and dropping them on the window.



REVIEW REMINDER SOFTWARE

DAYSENSE

DaySense 1.2

RATING ★★★★★

PRICE \$16 (around £9)

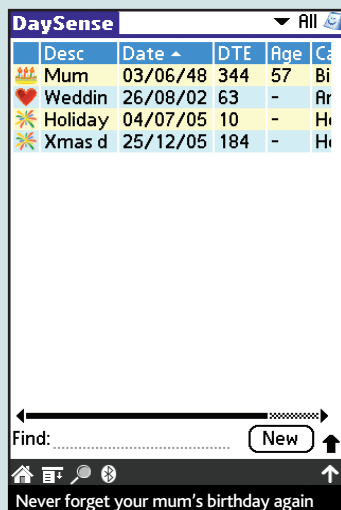
DETAILS www.daysense.com

Handheld computers may have usurped the personal organiser, but that doesn't necessarily mean they make you more organised. If you have difficulty remembering anniversaries, DaySense may help.

DaySense shows forthcoming events in a list that you can sort by description, date and the number of days before the event occurs. Events can be categorised and each category can have its own repeat interval. Birthdays, for example, repeat annually and if you create an entry that starts on the correct date of birth, the person's current age appears in the event list too.

Creating an event that spans a number of days, such as a holiday, means creating a daily repeating event but, annoyingly, the end date defaults to 'today' rather than the actual event date. The end date calendar doesn't show the event's start date either, and if you choose an end date that's before it, it's ignored without warning.

DaySense doesn't offer anything that isn't available in better diary replacements such as DateBook+, but if you're still using the standard Palm OS program, it's a simple way to stay in your family's good books.



REVIEW GAME

SMART BOX DESIGN

Triples 2.0

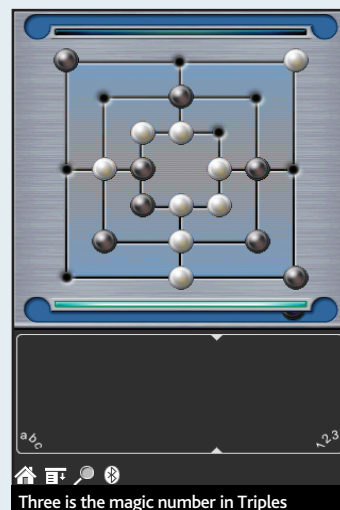
RATING ★★★★★

PRICE \$10 (around £6)

DETAILS www.smartboxdesign.com/triples.html

The simplest games are often the most fun to play and that's certainly the case with Triples 2.0. Known by various names, depending on the country, Triples is an ancient game in which two players take turns to place coloured pegs in holes on a simple board. Get three pegs in a row and you can remove one of your opponent's pegs, but once you have nine pegs in play, you can only slide your existing pegs to adjacent holes. A player reduced to three pegs can move pegs to any hole. The game ends when a player is down to two pegs, or when moving a peg proves impossible.

Triples presents a large, clear game board, and you can play against another human on the same handheld, or the computer at five difficulty levels. It doesn't take long to get the hang of the rules and a tutorial level will show you the basics within a couple of minutes. There's plenty of strategy to get to grips with, and although most games are short, that just means you'll be able to cram more of them into the moments of free time that Triples is ideal for filling.



2 To HotSync the simulator with your existing HotSync username, right-click the window and select Settings, Communication and enable the Redirect NetLib Calls to Host TCP/IP option. Then go to the HotSync screen and select Modem Sync Prefs from the Options menu. Select Network and click OK.

3 Select Primary PC Setup from the Options menu, then right-click the HotSync icon in your Windows System Tray and choose Setup. Click the Network tab on the dialog box and then click the TCP/IP button. Back in the simulator, enter the Primary PC Name and Address shown in the TCP/IP dialog box and click OK.

4 On the HotSync screen, select the Modem HotSync option, then click Select Service. Create a new service called LAN with the User Name 0 and Click Done. Right-click the HotSync icon in the Windows System Tray and enable Network. Start a HotSync on the simulator and you'll be prompted to choose a username. Create a new user rather than using your existing one. **CS**

CONTACT

PALM EXPERT

If there is anything you would like to see covered in *Palm Expert*, please contact us at the address below

palm@computershopper.co.uk

Q&A: PROBLEMS SOLVED

APPLES AND PAIRS

Q The Apple iPod has an address book and calendar. Can I export this data from the Palm Desktop to the iPod?

Lee Barker, via email

A To transfer contacts from your Palm to your iPod, you need to export them as vCards. Select the addresses you want in the Palm Desktop application, then choose Export vCard from the File menu. Select a location to export the vCards to (it's worth creating a folder) and click OK. Then drag and drop the vCards into the iPod's Contacts folder – the iPod needs to be set to Disk mode (Edit, Preferences in iTunes) first.

If your contact list changes regularly, this method is a bind, and it doesn't work with

addresses. A better solution is to use PalmPod – a free download from www.sappenin.com. This adds a toolbar button to the Palm Desktop application that, when clicked, lets you transfer your contacts, calendar and todo information to a connected iPod with just a few mouse clicks.

CUT A DASH

Q I'm getting to grips with Graffiti 2 after buying a Tungsten T5, but I can't figure out how to get an underscore character – I just get a dash.

Anna Jane Winters, via email

A To draw an underscore (_) symbol, draw an up stroke to enter punctuation mode, then a left-to-right dash and a dot followed by another up stroke to exit punctuation mode. The onscreen keyboard is no quicker: tap to display the keyboard, Shift, underscore, tap to return to Graffiti 2.

You can speed things up by creating a short cut. Go to Prefs, Shortcuts and create a short cut called Underscore that consists solely of the _ symbol. Now, whenever you draw the short cut stroke followed by a dash (-) in the number area, you'll get an underscore. Don't forget that Graffiti Help shows the strokes for all characters.

